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Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation
Musqueam Indian Band

RECONCILIATION AGREEMENT EXEMPLIFIES NEW RELATIONSHIP

VICTORIA – The Province and the Musqueam Indian Band have signed a landmark Reconciliation, Settlement and Benefits Agreement settling three outstanding court cases and providing a new path to reconciliation, announced Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister Michael de Jong with Musqueam Indian Band Chief Ernest Campbell today.

"This agreement allows the Province and Musqueam to build a new relationship and move beyond an era of litigation and confrontation," said de Jong. "We have negotiated a settlement that provides economic prosperity and stability for the lives of the Musqueam people and community – which is a benefit for the entire region."

"The Musqueam people have ratified a fair and honourable agreement, which validates the New Relationship as well as a new level of co-operation between the Band and the Province that is built on respect and rightful consultation," said Chief Campbell. "This agreement allows the Musqueam to achieve even greater independence for our people and for future generations."

"With this strong endorsement of the agreement through the community vote, the Musqueam have made it clear that they are committed to this agreement, to reconciliation and to a new relationship with the Province," said Premier Gordon Campbell. "This agreement respects the Musqueam's long connection to the land and supports their economic and social aspirations."

The Musqueam Reconciliation, Settlement and Benefits Agreement is a full and final settlement to three outstanding court cases (University Golf Course, Bridgepoint lands and the Celtic Shipyards). The agreement was ratified by members of the Musqueam Indian Band at a general band membership meeting on March 10, 2008. Ninety-eight per cent of voters endorsed the agreement.

The agreement includes a cash payment of $20.3 million and provides for Musqueam to acquire ownership of the University Golf Course lands (59 hectares); Bridgepoint Casino lands (seven hectares); and two parcels in Pacific Spirit Regional Park known as Block K (13.8 hectares) and Block F (8.5 hectares). Under the agreement, 7.3 hectares of the University Golf Course lands and 1.2 hectares of Block F will be established as parkland. It also ensures that the UBC golf course area remains a golf course until 2083.

Since 2005, the Province has been building a new relationship with First Nations based on respect, recognition and reconciliation. Through treaties and other agreements with First Nations, the Province is committed to closing the socio-economic gap that separates Aboriginal people from other British Columbians.

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For more information about this agreement and the New Relationship, visit www.gov.bc.ca/arr.

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1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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